VENDING TIMES 2/75 P.52

Of Electronics, Increased Leisure Time Keys To PMC Philosophy, State Executives

N, Penna. — "An nount of leisure time American people has es and markets for the dustry," maintained president of PMC recent interview with

ing out more," Jansen re is more volume at and new locations are sen feels that, due to volume, new types of be developed to meet f the public. PMC, ed, turned its skills to innovative amusement

lly an electronics firm" Ve make printed circuit rms as RCA and Control tinuing with that end of In pursuing PMC's into the amusement obtained the services of industry veteran, who ing director of the nding games division. v., 1974).

making video games," nt on. "I feel that these ed to upgrade the image as they could be put into did not want pin games." nues to produce video ding variety and depth to

ew locations opened up through the use of video games are colleges, hotels, and family fun centers. These locations remain strong, but innovation is needed to insure the steady progress of the industry.

Jansen indicated that he feels the manufacturers must continually develop new ideas; "we have one section of our plant devoted to designing and developing new ideas for games," he commented. "Many of our ideas are obtained through speaking with our distributors."

The firm is thus designing other types of units which will be of value to the operator in terms of his profit picture, as well as upgrading the image of the industry.

"For example," marketing director Bender told V/TMG, "we have educational units, such as a TV monitor designed as a teaching aid, which can also be used in businesses. We are introducing this concept into the amusement field through a quiz-type game."

The firm is also in the process of developing a solid-state amusement game without a TV screen. PMC already has a prototype of this unit, which uses regular balls and advanced technology in controlling the action on the playfield.

PMC's expertise in solid-state electronics gives its designers modern alternatives to exclusive reliance on switches and relays, facilitating servicing on the part of the operator's mechanics, Bender continued. "Easing the serviceman's job we feel will ultimately bring down the total cost of operating our equipment," he pointed out.

PMC also has available a "Light Organ" which is activated by the actual sound frequencies picked up by the microphones in any given location. "It incorporates an ultrasonic control; no wires are necessary," Bender explained. "It can be adjusted to pick up either music or voice through the use of directional mikes. The unit is wall-mounted and takes up the approximate space of a wall-hung game.

"Incorporated into this unit are a series of colored lights, arranged in various patterns on the board, pulsating in rhythm and varying in intensity with the volume," the sales executive said. "Each color is keyed to respond with a different frequency." Some of the designs available include a sunburst, a sunrise and a diamond.

ECONOMY

"The operator today must make more money," Bender emphasized. "I don't believe that the current 50-50 commission split being offered by the operator is the correct way to do business. Neither is front money. I firmly believe that the answer lies in a sliding scale concept.

"The operator must first decide what percent of return he wants on his investment, regardless whether it is a music, game, arcade or a combination of equipment. He then must decide whether the location wanting the equipment wants it for the purpose of making money or for enticing customers into his place of business for selling other merchandise," Bender observed.

"With most locations," he went on, "management looks upon the coin equipment being installed as income producing for them and could care less what the operator's investment might be. Knowing this, the operator must set a minimum income that will satisfy his return on his investment.

"In explaining to the location that you, the operator, must have a minimum, you must also indicate that once this minimum has been reached, the commission is raised, giving the location a greater percentage," Bender said. "This gives the location an enticement to increase the revenue in the equipment, there by increasing his revenue along with yours."

The firm excercises strict controls over production, warehousing no equipment, thus assuring the operator that the equipment he receives is always present production and any modifications or improvements are already included at the time of delivery.

"This also saves us from overbuilding and forcing us into a close-out situation with our distributors," Bender continued. "In addition, our distributors will not be forced to overstock. This will ultimately raise the trade-in allowance on each machine for the operator, as there will only be a limited number of machines on the market."

PMC recently moved into new quarters at 1120 Industrial Highway here. The new facility provides approximately 36,000 square feet and employs about 85 people. The firm indicates tha it is almost completely self-contained in terms of its manufacturing and does its own in-house testing in order to insure the quality of each game before it leaves the plant.

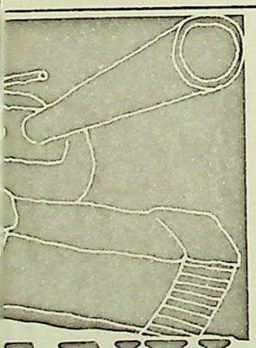
Instruction manuals are shipped with each game. Jansen explained that the manual gives the operator testing instructions, telling him exactly what is in each game and how to make minor repairs.

"Not everyone can be an expert in electronics," he said. "But, we feel that

(Continued on Page 58)

ARTY JANSEN

BOB BENDER



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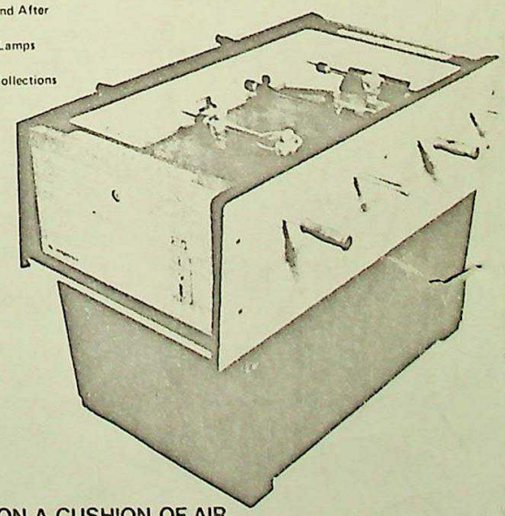

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i Sees Game Market As Potential Rival To Movies For Leisure Dolla

)S, Calif. — "The electronic can easily grow to three or e present size of the entire y," said Nolan Bushnell, Atari/Kee Inc. "We're in our y; the games business could ole competitor to the movie nparable in magnitude. It's eation, unlike movies; with eople today are already death. With the right nd the right marketing, I eople would prefer games." is wide open, even with eting concepts, the Atari V/T. "I'd estimate that the chieved about two per cent ration; if the operators raise per cent — which still isn't ey'll double their volume. ery attainable goal; in fact, I ten per cent market beyond our reach."

uggested that a prime aximum growth is a certain rise on the part of many usic and game operators. s are out there, but too few operators want to go after them," he observed. "As a result, too many locations get burned by fly-by-night organizations selling video games direct. This creates additional problems for legitimate operators. I don't see why we let these people come in and steal the business which our industry has had for years."

Operators should be alert to new responsiblities for locations, and the lack of such alertness is at the root of many much-discussed industry problems, the Atari founder suggested. "For example, industry competition tends to center on existing games locations, with operators seeking to get the business by offering high commissions, and perhaps large advances as well," he complained. "This capacity centers on a location which already has games. Meanwhile, there's an enterprise down the street which would love to have an amusement device, if someone would approach them. But the operator is inclined to say, 'that's not a games location — There aren't any games in there.' So the 'suede-shoe' people move in.

"In many cases, the first salesman gets the location; the second presentation, if conflicting, is never as good," he continued. "Re-educating a location is difficult; if an operator leaves the initial pitch to someone else, he's at a disadvantage."

Location-owned equipment is undesirable from the account's viewpoint, but management can't be expected to realize this with no instruction, Bushnell emphasized. "The operator fills a definite need, even beyond service and maintenance. For example, he's in a position to keep equipment rotating, which is necessary to keep customer interest — and revenue — up. Any game, however challenging or sophisticated, will become marginal if kept on location for two years."

In approaching new prospects for games, operators need to develop diffeerent selling skills, the Atari chairman told V/T. "I'd go after new locations with new equipment; this is an investment an operator makes to his own financial advantage — tax credits, revenue earning ability," he said. "Offering loans or advances is nothing but a financial drain, and it doesn't make any sense. If you offer an interior improvement — say, a little game room in a tavern — most locations will be receptive, and will be willing to sign a contract. I think this is the route that operators should take."

In establishing a commission structure, Bushnell believes that the games operator should seek a minimum off the top before any percentage arrangement takes effect. The guarantee should be calculated to insure adequate return on investment for the operator, who has considerable capital involved in the equipment placed on location.

In addition to the vast numbers of presently-untapped locations for electronic games, a whole new field is opening to the industry, the Atari founder continued. "The real growth will be in game centers," he predicted. "In the not-too-distant future, families will ask, 'shall we go to a movie or to a game center?' At Atari, we have the conce we have to provide the incentive."

In order to develop these conce Atari has been engaged pioneeringdesign and decor efforts, has developed a prototype game ce plan. "We envision an operation on same level of sophistication as a cocktail lounge, but with a ga theme," the company chairman V/T. "Rather than having separate ga units, as in the traditional arcade, w looking at methods of integrating games into monolithic mounts, includ walls and free-standing isla approachables from all four sides. idea is to create an environment wh maximizes coin slots per square foo Also in prospect are methods "orchestrating" customer utilization equipment in game rooms, rather th simply leaving individual patrons to s out individual games on their own, as present.

"The industry is capable of progress toward this method of operatio Bushnell emphasized. "But, at prese

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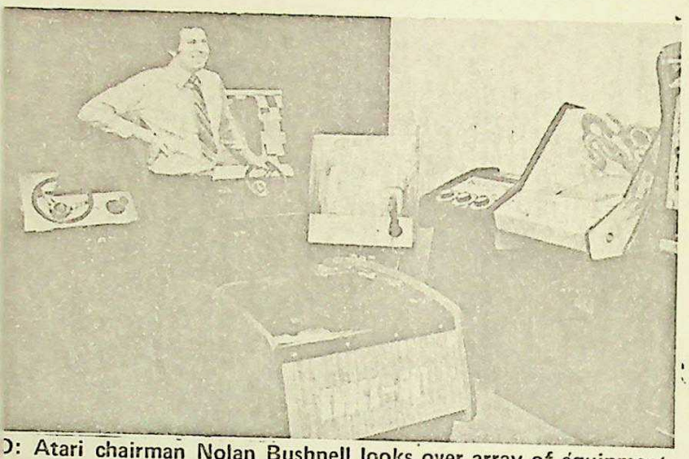
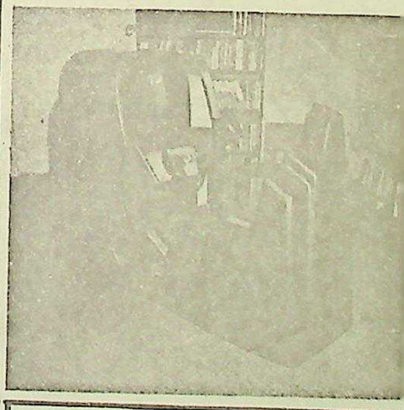


D: Atari chairman Nolan Bushnell looks over array of equipment Atari/Kee Games in display room at the firm's Los Gatos, Calif. ell believes that new electronic games technology has provided tools by which the industry can double its total market.

NEW PRODUCTS: Above, Atari er ployees test new "Indy 500" eigh player video racing game with maximu earnings potential of $2.00 per pla cycle; unit is seen as a transition to ne generation of high-revenue equipme maximizing coin slots per square foot game room space. Below is new on player arcade piece from Atari, "Hig way." This video driving game features multicolored Fiberglas cabinet, is d signed for arcade installations.



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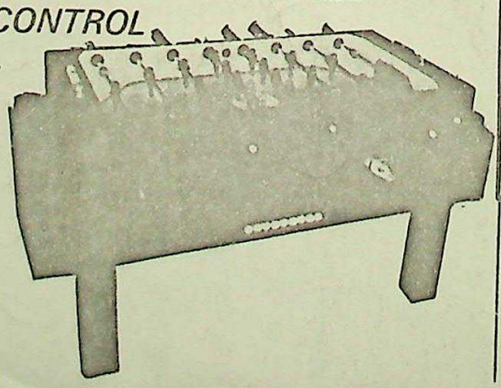

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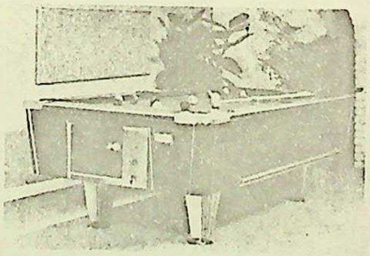

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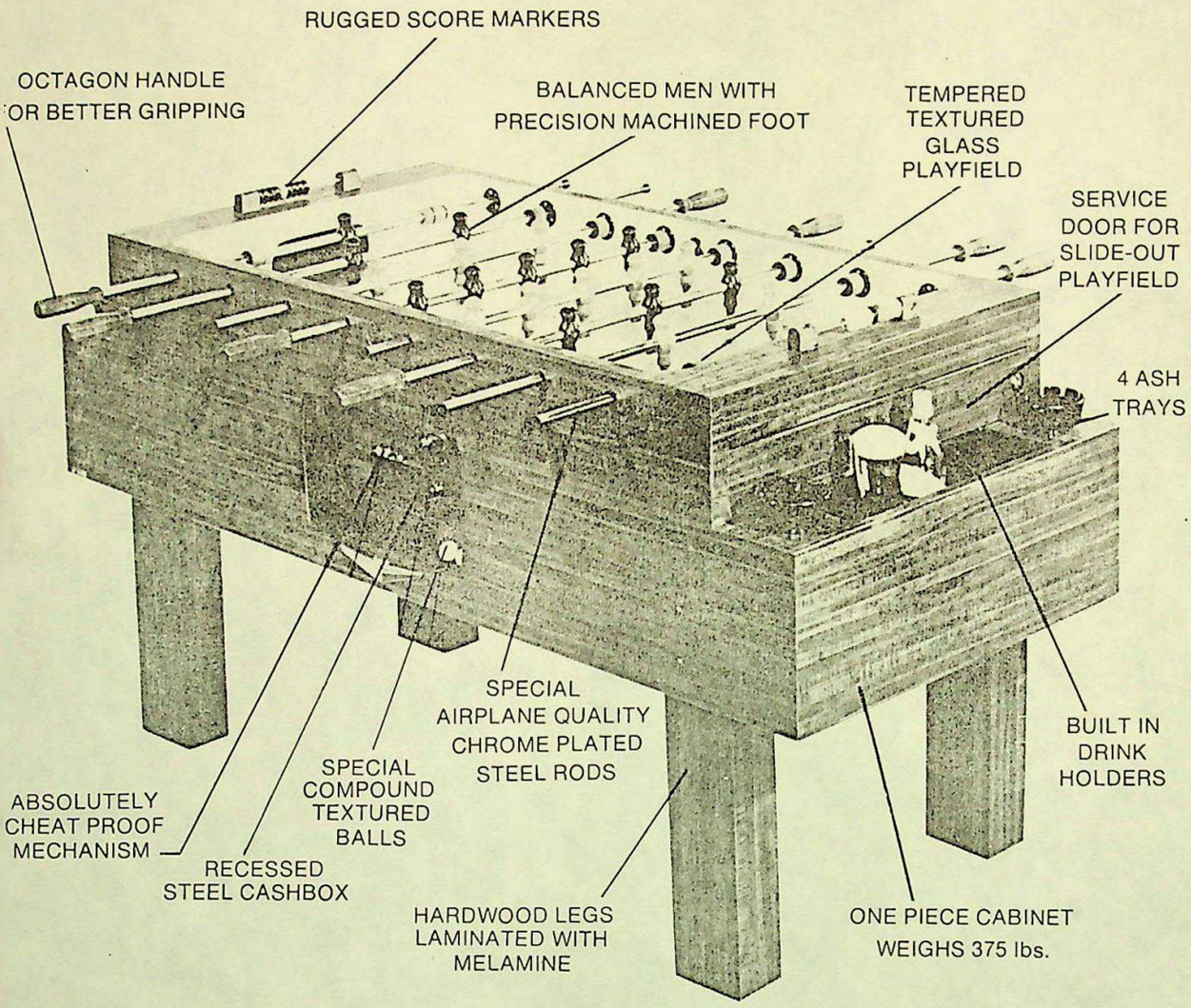

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should be moved quickly when this phase begins—before all its market appeal is gone.

"Proper set-up, percentaging, and maintenance will increase revenues on a per-machine basis," Powers concluded. "Recognizing the fact that a machine has a life cycle can help increase the essential element in your business, as in any good business: profit."

Irv Sandler of Sandler Vending wrapped up the seminar by hailing the coin industry's maintenance of honesty and integrity despite changing times. He noted that the tradition of sons following fathers into the business has helped preserve this "old-fashioned" commitment to fair dealing, and expressed the hope that this will never go out of style.

RELAXED ATMOSPHERE: Operators and other industry members enjoy conversation during luncheon at Sandler Vending Profit Seminar. Meeting-goers also received food for thought at the Seminar, which dealt with the new Susan B. Anthony dollar coin and the importance of a comprehensive marketing plan for pins.

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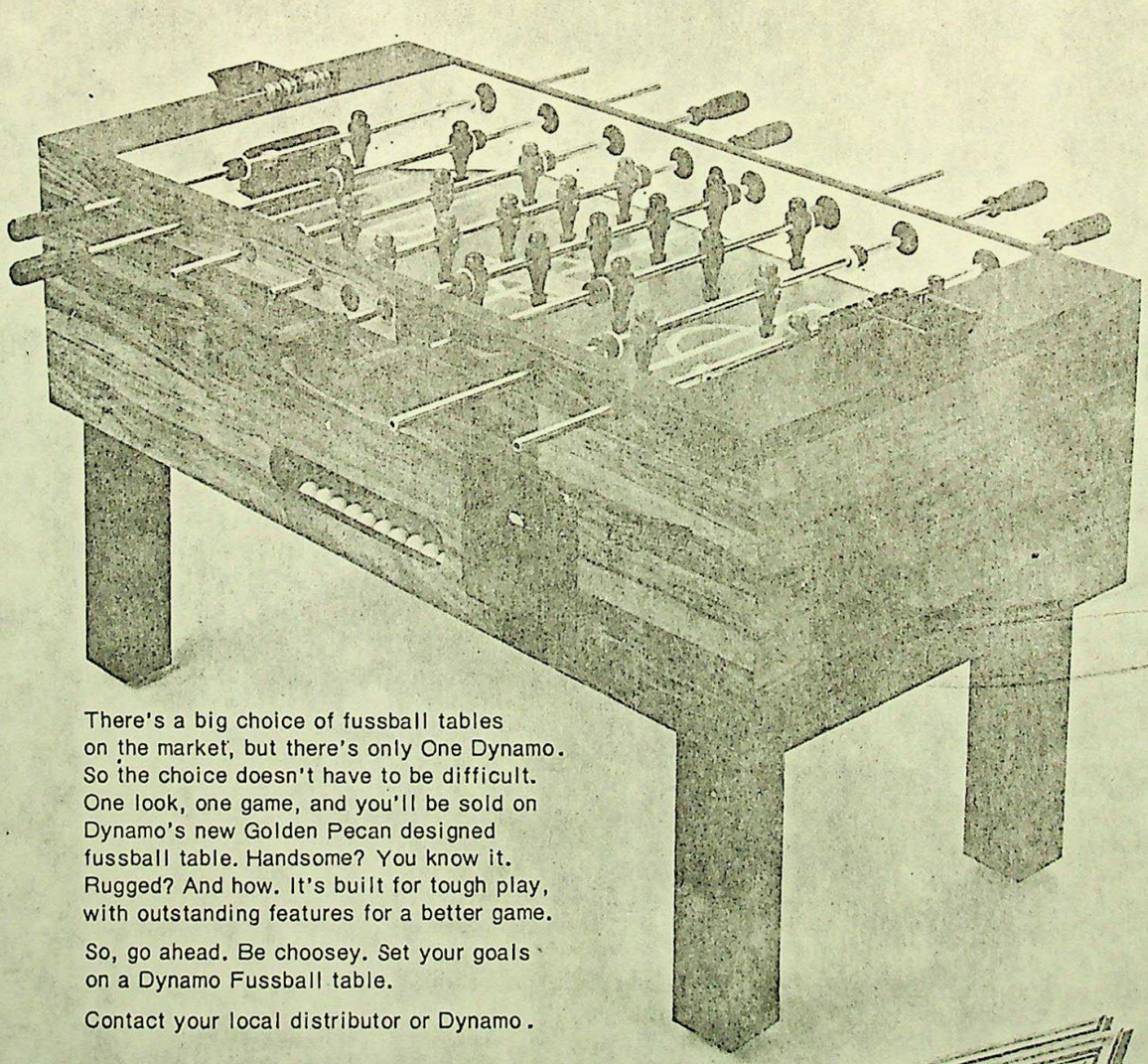

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J. Keenan As President

the board of Atari, Inc. of Sunnyvale, Calif.

Keenan became president of Atari when Key Games, Inc. merged with Atari in 1974. He assumed the position of board chairman when Bushnell left to take over the operation of Pizza Time.

Keenan holds a B.S. degree in accounting from LaSalle College (Philadelphia, Penna.). Prior to founding Key Games in 1973, he worked with International Business Machines and Applied Logic, Inc. in sales and sales management. He remains on the board of Atari

Bushnell continues with Pizza Time Theatre as chairman of the board. Bushnell observed that "we intend to repeat the phenomenal success we had with Atari."

JOE KEENAN

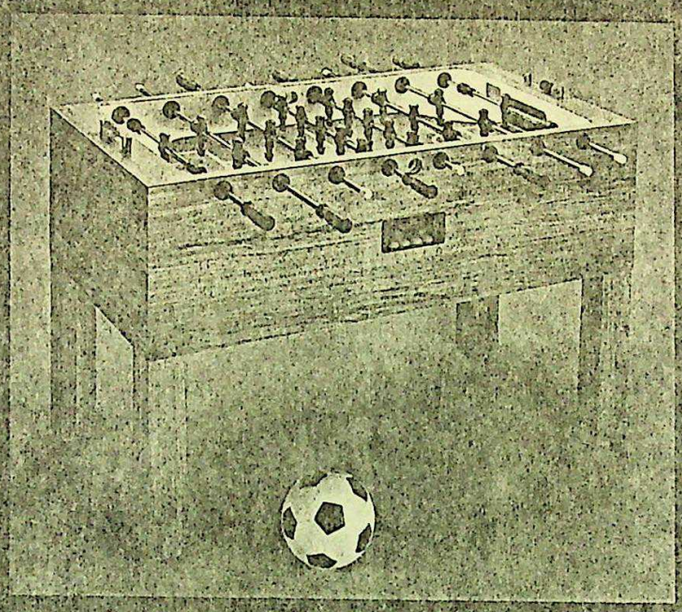
Time-Out Opens Fourth Center In Baltimore-D.C.

MANASSAS, Va. — Time-Out Family Amusement Centers recently announced the opening of its fourth store in the Baltimore-Washington area.

The new Time-Out is located in the new Laurel Centre Mall and opened Oct. 11, 1979. The opening activities included a joint promotional effort with Laurel Centre.

According to officials for Time-Out, "every Time-Out Family Amusement Center has the largest in electronic pinball, video, driving and target games. This past year alone, we brought to this area one of the most unusual games around. This was 'Bird Brain, a game featuring a live chicken that played Tic-Tac-Toe."

TORNADO



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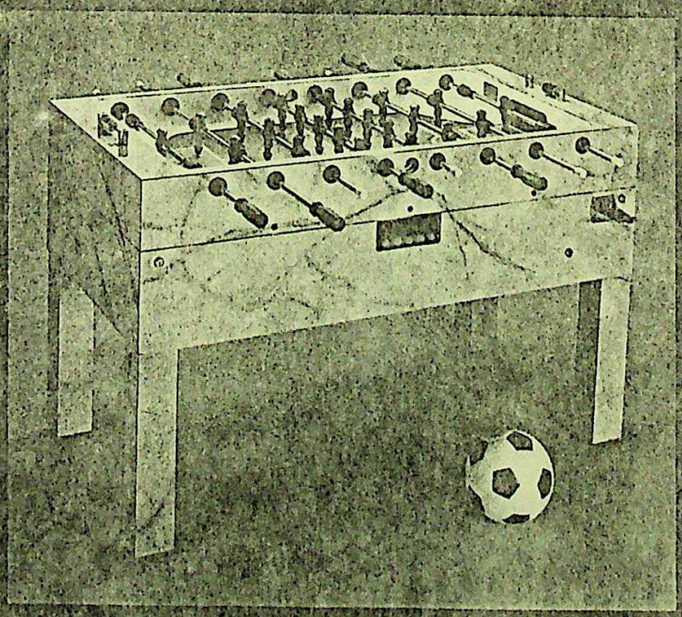
Material: ¾" fiberwood
1½" bearing wall
Adjustable non-skid leg levers
Counter-balanced men
Tempered textured glass playfield



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